THE CLOCK TOWER CHANGED SHAPE?!
AND THOSE ARE THE SHADOWS THAT ATTACKED REI!
THIS DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. THAT SHOULDN'T BE HERE...
DON'T TELL ME...THAT'S REI-CHAN'S SHADOW?!
NO, IT'S NOT. THE SHADOWS ARE GOING BERSERK.
THEY'RE TRYING TO STOP ME FROM TAKING REI AWAY.

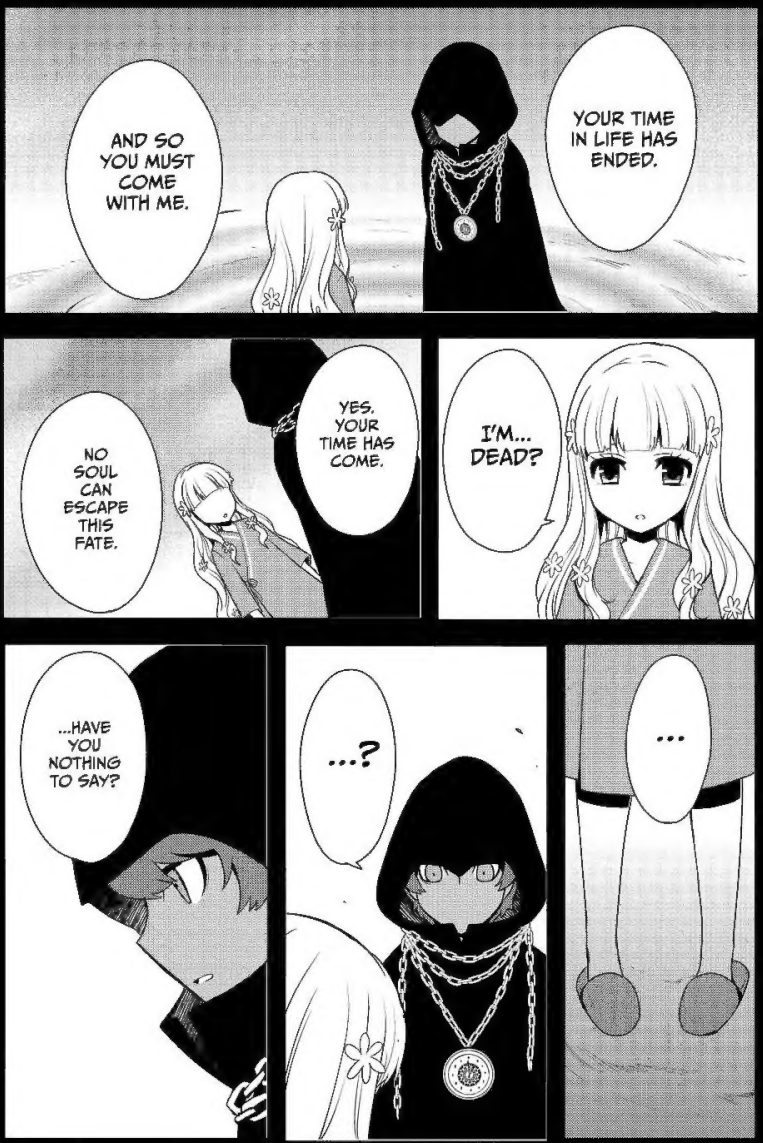
REI IS INSIDE THIS TOWER.

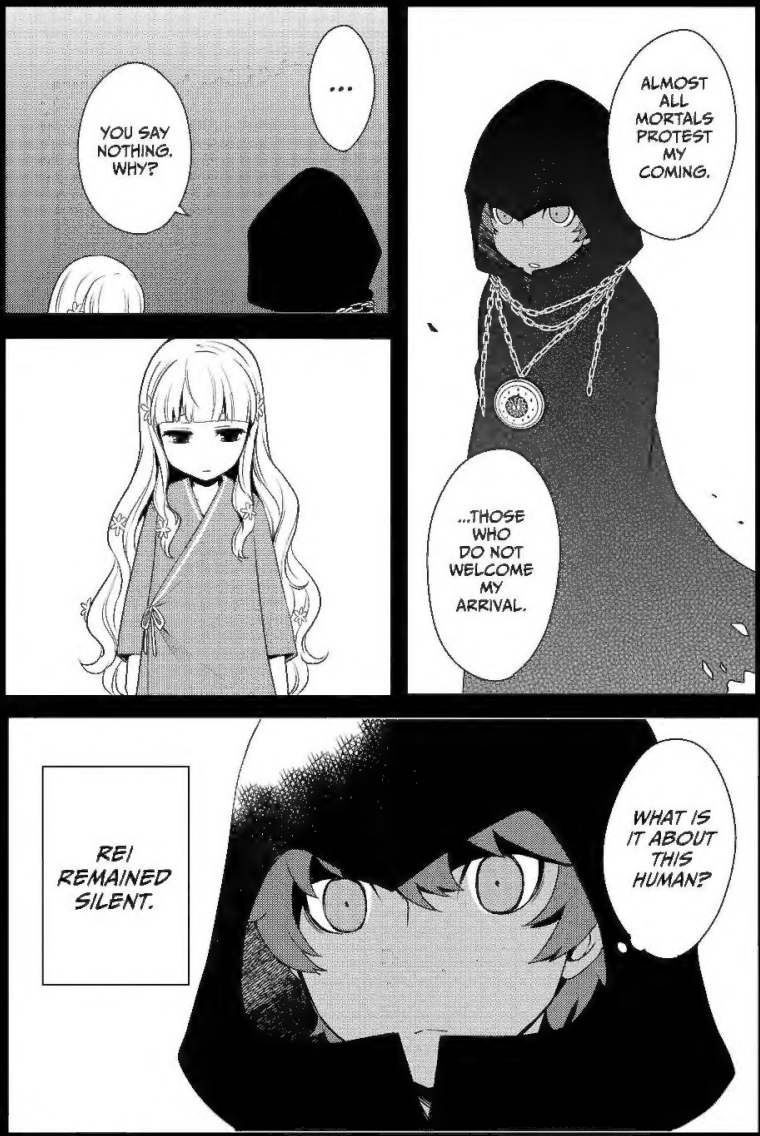
THEY DON'T WANT TO LOSE THEIR HOLD ON THIS PLACE.
BECAUSE IF REI LEAVES WITH ME, THIS WORLD WILL CEASE TO EXIST.
CEASE TO EXIST?
REI CREATED THIS PLACE...OR RATHER,
I CREATED IT, BASED ON HER MEMORIES.

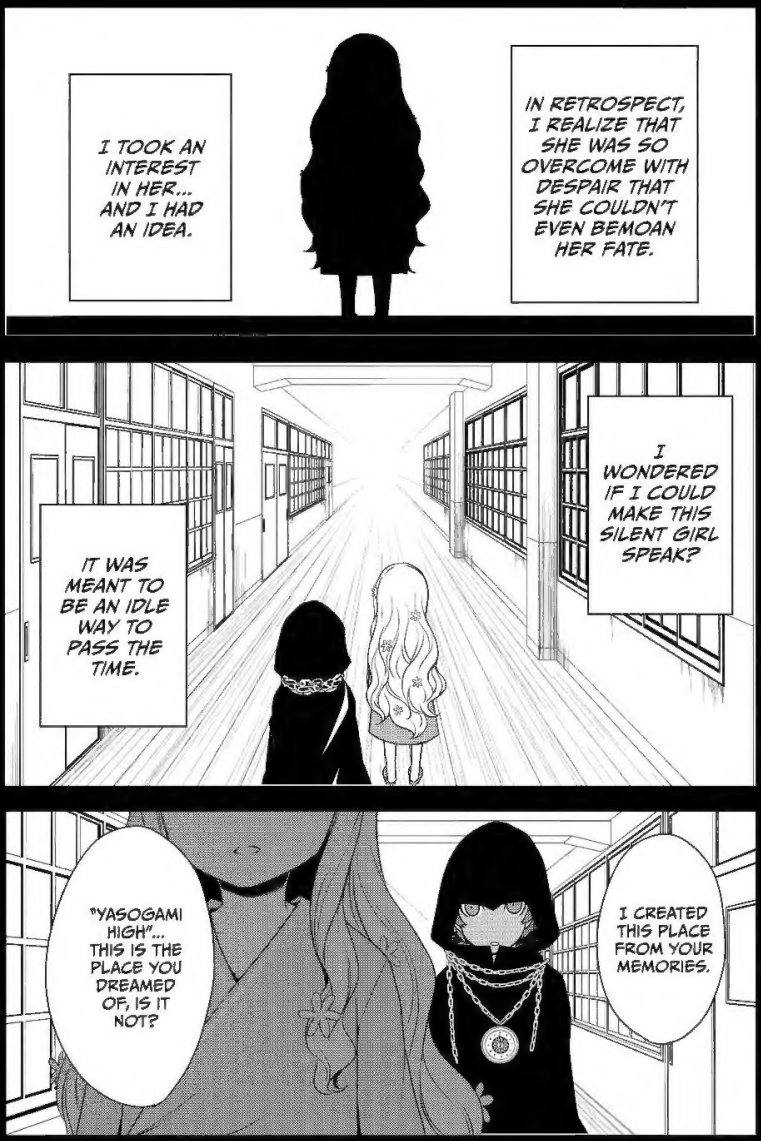
ABOUT YOU AND REI...AND HOW WE CAN SAVE HER.
...ZEN, TELL US.
I HAD COME TO COLLECT A GIRL WHOSE LIFE HAD ENDED... "REI."
AND TAKE HER TO THE PLACE WHERE ALL LIFE RETURNS.
MY NAME IS CHRONOS.
...YOU MAY KNOW ME AS DEATH.

THE HAVEN IN THE RIFT, 12 YEARS AGO.
WHERE AM I?
...?
WHY AM I...

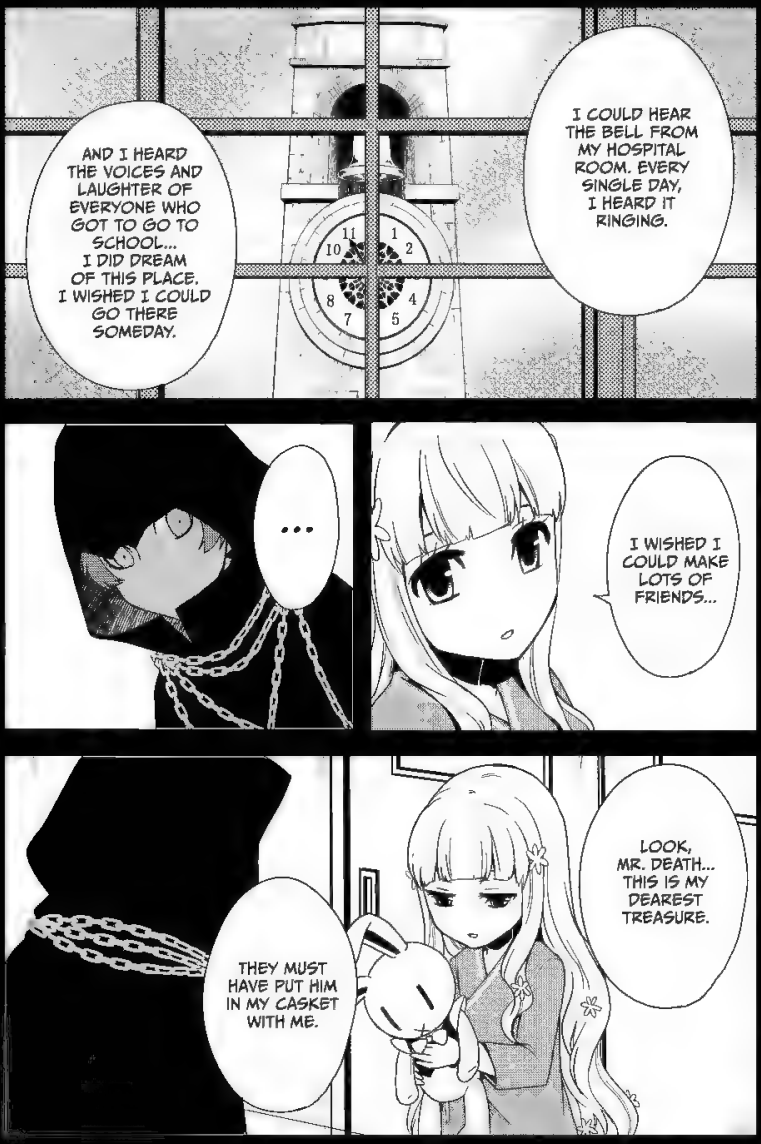
WHO'S THERE?
MY NAME IS CHRONOS.
JUST THINK OF ME AS DEATH.
DEATH ...?


YOUR TIME IN LIFE HAS ENDED.
AND SO YOU MUST COME WITH ME.
I'M... DEAD?
YES. YOUR TIME HAS COME.
NO SOUL CAN ESCAPE THIS FATE.
...
...?
...HAVE YOU NOTHING TO SAY?


ALMOST ALL MORTALS PROTEST MY COMING.
...THOSE WHO DO NOT WELCOME MY ARRIVAL.
...
YOU SAY NOTHING. WHY?
REI REMAINED SILENT.
WHAT IS IT ABOUT THIS HUMAN?


I TOOK AN INTEREST IN HER... AND I HAD AN IDEA.
IN RETROSPECT, I REALIZE THAT SHE WAS SO OVERCOME WITH DESPAIR THAT SHE COULDN'T EVEN BEMOAN HER FATE.
I WONDERED IF I COULD MAKE THIS SILENT GIRL SPEAK?
IT WAS MEANT TO BE AN IDLE WAY TO PASS THE TIME.
"YASOGAMI HIGH"... THIS IS THE PLACE YOU DREAMED OF, IS IT NOT?
I CREATED THIS PLACE FROM YOUR MEMORIES.

YASO-GAMI... HIGH.
THIS IS THE SCHOOL...
...I WOULD HAVE GONE TO.
HMPH. SO YOU'VE FINALLY OPENED YOUR MOUTH.
...?


I COULD HEAR THE BELL FROM MY HOSPITAL ROOM. EVERY SINGLE DAY, I HEARD IT RINGING.
AND I HEARD THE VOICES AND LAUGHTER OF EVERYONE WHO GOT TO GO TO SCHOOL... I DID DREAM OF THIS PLACE. I WISHED I COULD GO THERE SOMEDAY.
...
I WISHED I COULD MAKE LOTS OF FRIENDS...
LOOK, MR. DEATH... THIS IS MY DEAREST TREASURE.
THEY MUST HAVE PUT HIM IN MY CASKET WITH ME.

AND THIS RING. MY MOTHER BOUGHT IT FOR ME AT A FESTIVAL.
SHE TOLD ME TO HAVE A HAPPY MARRIAGE...
A STUFFED RABBIT... ISN'T IT CUTE?
HE'S FROM A PICTURE BOOK.
MY NAME IS NIKO.
...MOM DISAPPEARED AFTER THAT.
SHE SAID SHE DIDN'T WANT ME.
MOM TOLD ME SHE NAMED ME NIKO BECAUSE I'M HER SECOND CHILD.
THE NURSES SAY IT MEANT SHE WANTED ME TO ALWAYS BE SMILING, BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE.

THEY GAVE IT TO ME AFTER THEY SHAVED MY HEAD.
THE NURSES TOOK SOME AND SAVED IT WHEN IT WAS STILL LONG AND PRETTY.
AND THIS IS HAIR... IT'S MINE.
BUT...I COULDN'T THROW IT AWAY.
...BUT I DIDN'T LIKE IT AT ALL. I CRIED AND SCREAMED, "WHY WOULD YOU DO THIS TO ME?!" ...I WAS SO ANGRY.
WHAT IS THIS? ...A LETTER?
TO NICO-CHAN
PLEASE REST IN PEACE
YUKI
THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE IN YOUR HAND.
...

OH...IT'S FROM THE GIRL WHO WAS IN THE BED NEXT TO MINE.
SHE WAS THREE YEARS OLDER THAN ME. HER NAME WAS YUKI-CHAN.
I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD THIS...
IT SAYS, "PLEASE REST IN PEACE."
SHE WAS REALLY PRETTY, AND NICE. AND SHE ALWAYS CHEERED ME UP WHEN I WAS CRYING...
BUT SHE GOT TO GO HOME. ...SHE SENT ME LETTERS.
THEY'D SAY THINGS LIKE, "I'M DOING WELL"...AND "YOU CAN DO IT, NIKO-CHAN."
...*REST IN PEACE," IT SAYS.
TO NICO-CHA
PLEASE REST IN PEACE.
YUK
WHEN SHE'S STILL ALIVE, LAUGHING AND SMILING.
I... THOUGHT I DID MY BEST.
BUT... MAYBE IT WASN'T ENOUGH.

IT'S NOT FAIR! IT'S NOT FAIR! WHY ME?!
WHY... WHY DID I HAVE TO BE BORN?!
I HAVE NOTHING! NO FRIENDS, NO PARENTS— NOT EVEN MY HEALTH!!
WHY WAS I BORN?
I PRAYED TO GOD EVERY DAY.
BUT NOT ONE OF THOSE PRAYERS WAS GRANTED!
WHY DO I EVEN EXIST?!

WHAT WAS THE POINT IN MY LIFE?!
3-1
BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE IT... EVERYBODY ELSE GETS TO COME HERE EVERY DAY... BUT I...
I'M GOING TO DIE ALONE...
...
THANK YOU, MR. DEATH...FOR SHOWING ME THIS PLACE.

IT'S JUST... NOT FAIR.
IT'S TOO MUCH... IT'S TOO MUCH!
HURRY UP AND KILL ME! TAKE ME AWAY RIGHT NOW!
I DON'T WANT TO SEE THIS!!
IN MY SURPRISE, I SHIELDED HER EYES...
WITH THAT, SHE TRIED TO GOUGE OUT HER OWN EYES.

...AND THEN I TOOK HER MEMORIES.
I AM...
...
...WHO ARE YOU?
YOUR NAME...IS NIKO.
NI... KO?
HUH? WHAT... WAS MY NAME AGAIN?
MY NAME...

WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE SHAKING... ARE YOU SCARED?
SCARED ...?
NIKO... BECAUSE SHE WAS THE SECOND CHILD.
...LET'S MAKE IT SOME-THING ELSE.
SOMETHING... MORE TO YOUR LIKING.
...NO. AND I WILL MAKE SURE...
...YOU ARE NEVER ALONE, EITHER.
YOU'RE NOT ALONE.
IT'S OKAY. I'M HERE WITH YOU.

...MY NAME IS ZHN.
IT MEANS "ONE WHO SPENDS LIFE WITH YOU."
ZEN... LIKE THE WORD FOR "GOOD"?
YOU ARE VERY NICE!
...THAT WILL DO. THANK YOU.
YOUR NAME IS PHILEI.
PHILEI...
IT MEANS "BELOVED".
FI...LAY...
PHILEI.
FEELAY... THAT'S HARD TO SAY. FFFI...F...REI...

ZEN AND REI!
EH HEH HEH... NICE TO MEET YOU, ZEN!
I'LL JUST GO BY REI!
ZEN...?
ZEN, WHAT'S WRONG?
DO YOU HURT SOME-WHERE? DON'T CRY...
I'M SO SORRY...
...REI.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DESCRIBE WHAT SPARKED INSIDE ME THEN...
IT WAS AN...EMOTION. LIKE IF I HAD A HEART, I WOULD HAVE WANTED TO TEAR IT OUT AND CRUSH IT.
NO ONE CAN COME BACK FROM THE DEAD... BUT YOU SHOWED REI-SAN WHAT SHE COULD HAVE HAD IN LIFE...
YES... AND IT HURT HER.
AND I LET MY HALF-FORMED EMOTIONS TEMPT ME INTO TAKING HER MEMORIES.

...
I...I COVERED UP MY MISTAKE!
CHRONOS OBEYS TIME, AND IS A HARBINGER OF ONE'S END OF TIME... HE CANNOT TURN HIS BACK ON THAT DUTY.
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST... I WANTED TO GIVE THE ANSWER SHE LONGED FOR... TO TELL HER WHY SHE LIVED.
...THAT'S WHY I SUSPENDED THE INEVITABLE.
BUT I DIDN'T HAVE THAT ANSWER.
I DON'T HAVE A HEART... SO I DIDN'T HAVE ANY WORDS OF COMFORT FOR HER.

YOU DECIDED NOT TO TAKE REI-CHAN AWAY?
YES.
I SEALED AWAY HER... AND MY OWN MEMORIES... AND HID THEM IN SOME OF THE ROOMS OF THIS SCHOOL,
ALONG WITH REI'S BELONG-INGS.
EVENTUALLY THEY BECAME LABY-RINTHS...
...WHICH PREVENTED THE TRUTHS INSIDE THEM FROM BEING DISCOVERED.
THE GUARDIANS IN EACH OF THE LABYRINTHS WERE REI'S CREATION, AS WELL—ANOTHER MEANS TO KEEP THE TRUTH BURIED.
SO THAT'S HOW THE LABYRINTHS AND THE GUARDIANS CAME ABOUT.
BUT WEREN'T REI-CHAN'S MEMORIES ALREADY GONE BY THEN?

...IT'S TRUE THAT REI REMEMBERS NOTHING.
BUT SUBCONSCIOUSLY, SHE WAS ALWAYS AFRAID OF THE TRUTH.
REI WAS CONSTANTLY EATING IN AN ATTEMPT TO LIVE—SHE WAS HUNGRY FOR LIFE.
AND REI-CHAN... SAVORED EVERY BITE.
I LOCKED IT ALL AWAY, AVERTING MY EYES FROM REALITY... AND I DECIDED TO SPEND MY TIME HERE WITH REI.
A LONG, PEACEFUL TIME...UNTIL I COULD EVENTUALLY TELL HER WHY SHE HAD LIVED.

I...I WAS THE ONE WHO TRAPPED REI IN HERE...
FOR MY OWN SELFISH REA-SONS!
...I'M SORRY FOR DRAGGING ALL OF YOU INTO THIS.
YOU HEARD THE BELL.
THE FOURTH LOCK ON THE VELVET ROOM DOORS SHOULD BE BROKEN NOW...
YOU CAN GO BACK TO WHERE YOU BELONG.
G-GO BACK...?
THIS PLACE IS UNSTABLE.
IT WILL VANISH ALONG WITH REI, ITS MASTER.
YOU SHOULD GO HOME... WHILE YOU STILL CAN.
BUT...

I WILL GO TO REI. I PROMISED HER I WOULD BE WITH HER.
...WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?
...
I... I HAVE TO.
GO? BY YOURSELF ?
THAT CLOCK TOWER IS SWARMING WITH SHADOWS.
I WANT TO SAVE REI-CHAN, TOO!
WE ALL FEEL THE SAME WAY. WE DON'T WANT TO LEAVE REI-SAN, EITHER.
ARE YOU SAYING OUR FEELINGS... OUR CONCERN DOESN'T MATTER?
THAT AIN'T WHAT WE'RE ASKING, DUDE.
...?

PUT YOURSELF IN OUR SHOES. IT'S KINDA AWKWARD TO FIND OUT YOUR FRIEND'S BEEN DEAD ALL ALONG.
WE HAVE TO GO FIND HER AND SETTLE ALL THIS, EVEN IF IT MEANS DRAGGING YOU KICKING AND SCREAMING.
FRIENDS ...
THAT'S RIGHT! I THOUGHT WE WERE ALL FRIENDS!
...
YOU'LL... COME WITH ME?

THANK YOU.

TO BE CONTINUED